

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In this Amendment, Applicant has amended independent claim 1 to more particularly claim Applicant's invention. In amended claim 1, Applicant now claims that the hydrophilic polymer 11a has a hydrophilic group in a main chain or a side chain thereof, and is unevenly distributed in an area near a surface of the key touch member. Applicant respectfully submits that this feature of Applicant's invention is clearly disclosed in Applicant's specification at least at para. 0022 and in Figure 3. According to this feature, the key can more effectively provide a high water absorption, as described in para. 0023 of Applicant's specification. Further, since a reduced amount of the hydrophilic polymer may be added, it is possible to reduce the manufacturing cost of the key touch member and to enhance the dimensional accuracy for the key touch member.

Applicant respectfully submits that even if Yoshikawa's key touch member can be modified by Oshima to include a key top member made of a synthetic resin having a hydrophilic polymer added thereto, and even if the references can be further modified by Nielsen to include a hydrophilic polymer which has a hydrophilic group in a main chain or a side chain thereof, that the modified references still do not disclose the feature of Applicant's invention of amended claim 1 where the hydrophilic polymer has a hydrophilic group in a main chain or a side chain thereof and is unevenly distributed in an area near a surface of the key touch member. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that even if the Examiner's argued combination of Yoshikawa, Oshima, and Nielsen can be made, the features of amended claim 1 are still not disclosed by the cited references.

Since the present Office Action is a "Final" Action, Applicant is filing a Request for Continued Examination concurrent with the filing of this Amendment.

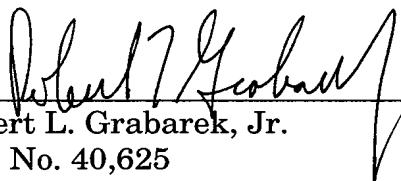
Applicant respectfully submits that the application is now in condition for allowance. If there are any questions regarding this Amendment or the

application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

As provided above, this paper includes a Petition for an Extension of Time sufficient to effect a timely response. Please charge any deficiency in fees, or credit any overpayment of fees, to Deposit Account No. 05-1323 (Docket No. 056272.58171US).

Respectfully submitted,
CROWELL & MORING LLP

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